

Whereas: The United States incarcerates a far larger fraction of its residents than any other nation in the world, with a significant fraction of those incarcerated being detained prior to trial

and whereas: A consensus is emerging among many groups of people including sociologists, criminologists, elected officials of both major parties, and concerned informed citizens, that our excessive level of incarceration is not contributing to the public safety, but on the contrary is needlessly damaging many lives,

and whereas: This consensus extends to pretrial detention, which is especially biased by the bail system against people of limited means

and whereas: Many studies indicate that evidence-based risk assessment as opposed to bail produces better outcomes

and whereas: Excessive incarceration damages both the public and private economy in addition to the human cost

and whereas: The Champaign County Board is considering plans for future jail facilities in Champaign County.

Therefore be it resolved that the Urbana City Council:

Urges the Champaign County Board to join with other entities in Champaign County to plan for a substantial reduction in the number of people incarcerated in the County.

Urges that such planning include provision of alternatives to incarceration for non-violent offenders, and people afflicted with mental health and substance abuse problems.

Urges that such planning involve municipalities, law enforcement agencies, State's Attorney's office, health care providers, and social service agencies.

Pledges, on behalf of the residents of Urbana, to actively participate in such planning.

Urges that planning for jail facilities be suspended temporarily until an agreement is reached on a target population number of inmates, and plans for alternatives to incarceration.